

# Do you suffer from **Postpartum Depression?**



## **What is postpartum depression?**

- Postpartum depression is an illness that affects women after childbirth. It is very common and occurs in 15% of all women, or one out of every eight women.
- It is common for new mothers to feel emotional for a couple of days following the birth of a new baby. These “baby blues” normally go away after a few days.
- When the feelings of sadness, anger, anxiety, being overwhelmed and not able to cope do not go away but continue and even worsen over several weeks, it is most likely postpartum depression.
- These symptoms can last for many months to years without treatment from your doctor.

## **What are the symptoms of postpartum depression?**

- Feeling sad or angry for no apparent reason
- Feelings of inadequacy and inability to cope
- Not being interested in the things that you normally like to do
- Unable to sleep even when the baby is sleeping
- Feeling fatigued and having no energy
- Not able to concentrate on what you are doing
- Making simple decisions is difficult to do
- Feeling guilty or worthless
- Feeling agitated or irritable

## **Who is at risk for postpartum depression?**

- Women who have suffered from depression or anxiety previously in their life or have had postpartum depression before have the greatest risk
- Women with little to no help at home to care for the new baby and other children such as single mothers and women whose partners are not supportive
- Women who experience other life changing events happening at the same time as the birth of the new baby, such as moving, death in the family, or a new job

## **How is postpartum depression treated?**

Postpartum depression is a disease, which is treated many different ways. Your doctor can talk to you about which approach might be the best for you. Here are some possible courses of treatment:

- Counseling with a therapist is very effective. It is also helpful to have the baby's father in the counseling sessions.
- Medication is often needed to make the symptoms better. Antidepressant medication is very effective and generally has few side effects. If you are breast-feeding your baby, your doctor can talk to you about which medications have been shown not to harm the baby.
- Talking with other women who have suffered from postpartum depression or who are suffering from postpartum depression can also help.

## **Where can I go for help and support?**

Along with talking to your doctor, many groups and organizations can answer questions, and provide further support.

- Depression After Delivery  
1-800-944-4PPD (4773) <http://www.depressionafterdelivery.com>
- Postpartum Support International <http://www.postpartum.net>
- Mental Health Association in Utah <http://www.xmission.com/~mhaut/>  
(801) 596-3705
- The Postpartum Stress Center <http://www.postpartumstress.com>